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Security Council

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Letter dated 21 June 2001 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

The members of the Security Council, in considering your report of 30 March 2001 (S/2001/331) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, are of the view that further advice of the Secretary-General would be useful in the Council's consideration of the issues contained in the report. This procedure is being followed on an exceptional basis.

The members of the Security Council welcome your report of 30 March 2001 (S/2001/331) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The Council held an open debate on the report on 23 April 2001, at which a number of practical ideas for implementation were proposed. The members of the Security Council believe that the report should be considered more widely within the United Nations system, and therefore recommend that it be transmitted as an official document to the General Assembly. Recognizing the sensitivity and complexity of the issues involved, the members of the Security Council would suggest the following for the Secretary-General's consideration:

(1) The recommendations on the protection of civilians in armed conflict contained in the first report of the Secretary-General (S/1999/957) where a consensus exists, as reflected in resolutions 1265 (1999) and 1296 (2000), should be reorganized by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Security Council into different groups with the aim of clarifying responsibilities, enhancing cooperation and facilitating their implementation in the context of the Council's intention to take into account relevant recommendations contained in the report when carrying out its work. The recommendations in the second report (S/2001/331) should be reorganized based on the spirit, principles and approaches of resolutions 1265 (1999) and 1296 (2000), taking into account the different responsibilities and mandates of the United Nations organs and the need to further strengthen coordination among the organizations of the entire United Nations system so as to facilitate the Security Council's further deliberation on them.

(2) The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General to further ensure closer cooperation between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including by establishing a cross-cutting team of the Office and the Department, to facilitate due consideration of issues related to the protection of civilians in the design, planning and implementation of peacekeeping operations.

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(3) In order to facilitate consideration by the Security Council, whenever appropriate, of issues pertaining to protection of civilians in its deliberations on the establishment, change or close of peacekeeping mandates, an aide-memoire listing those issues that are relevant in this regard should be drafted in close cooperation with the Council.

(4) The members of the Security Council would welcome a briefing by the Secretariat on the status of these initiatives by November 2001, with a view to finalizing them as soon as feasible thereafter. To further ensure the necessary interaction between the Council and the Secretariat, it is also suggested to organize half-day expert-level seminars on specific issues related to the implementation of the above initiatives. The first of these could be held at a suitable time prior to the briefing by the Secretariat.

Against this background, and bearing in mind Security Council decisions in this respect, the members of the Council request the Secretary-General to present a report no later than November 2002 on the status of implementation of the relevant recommendations with regard to protection of civilians in armed conflict, and any other matter he wishes to bring to the attention of the Security Council on this subject matter.

(*Signed*) Anwarul Karim **Chowdhury**
President of the Security Council